

REPORT NO. 6: JULY 8, 1985

The purpose of this report is 1) to indicate the nature and results of recent research; and 2) to provide an outline format for the final historical report on Oxon Hill Manor.

1. Recent Primary and Secondary Research

My recent investigations have included research into both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources utilized were located at the Maryland Hall of Records in Annapolis and included the following Prince George's County records: Accounts Against Deceased Estates (1854-1897), Annual Valuations (1763-1881), Certificates of Freedom (slaves-1806-1863), Chattel Papers (1709-1922), Chattel Records (1867-1869), Levy List (1800-1887), Levy Papers (1781-1883), Road Papers (1747-1900), Slave Statistics (1867-1869), Tax Collection Daybook (1876-1903), Tax Collection Record (1780-1877), Tobacco Inspection Accounts (1781-1802), Tobacco Inspection Papers (1821-1840), and Tobacco Inspection Proceedings (1781-1838).

In general, these records offered almost nothing of value to the history of the Oxon Hill Manor site. While sometimes useful for general information and historical orientation, they did not tend to focus on specific individuals and properties. When such specific information was present in the records, it did not deal with the Oxon Hill property or with individuals associated with the property.

While at the Hall of Records I also examined a variety of land records not previously studied. With new information regarding the occupancy patterns at Oxon Hill Manor in the Nineteenth Century, I was able to clarify certain transactions involving Thomas Berry, the occupant of Oxon Hill Manor from 1812 to the mid-1850s. The most significant discovery was that Berry signed a formal separation agreement with his wife, Mary Berry, in 1847. Owing to recent "unhappy differences," the couple agreed "to live separate and apart from each other during the remainder of their lives" (Prince George's County Land Records, JBB 5, p.102, Nov. 10, 1847). Berry's son, Thomas E. Berry, would sign a similar agreement with his wife, Elizabeth Berry, in 1874. In the 1847 separation agreement, Thomas and Mary Berry arranged for Mary to take full possession of their "Seat Pleasant" property (see Report No. 5), "for the most part" the same land Mary had inherited from her father, Thomas O. Williams. In the settlement with her husband, Mary also received 23 slaves, 17 hogs, 23 shoals, 30 sheep, 8 oxen, 10 cows, 3 horses, 3 carts, 30 hogsheads of tobacco, 100 barrels of corn, 200 bushels of wheat, 1 carriage and horses, some "plows and gears," and the oats and rye currently planted on the land. She was residing at Seat Pleasant at the time. This agreement, of course, explains the appearance of Mary Berry as the owner of Seat Pleasant as a separate entry in the county tax assessment for 1847 (see Report No. 5).

The division of the property in 1847 strongly confirms the association between Thomas Berry and Oxon Hill Manor reported in my fifth report. It also confirms that Berry owned considerable personal property,

since presumably the valuable property received by his wife represented only a portion of his total wealth. Also, the presence of various animals and crops suggests that Berry's farming practices were quite diversified, at least insofar as he did not focus on tobacco to the exclusion of other crops or of animal husbandry.

The consequences of the separation on Berry's social and economic status cannot be determined precisely from these actions in 1847. Clearly his personal wealth suffered a significant decline, but he remained a prosperous landowner. Whether the separation reflected the same kind of mental instability present in his son at the time of the 1874 separation agreement with his wife is not clear. The fact that Berry had been elected as a Magistrate of the Magistrates Court for the 6th Election District (Spaldings) in 1845 would indicate that he was not regarded as unstable in any way (Prince George's County Land Records, JBB 4, p. 218, July 12, 1845).

Additional research into the land records since my last report included clarification of the transactions of the 1870s and 1880s as well as completion of the chain of title after 1888 (to fill out the information provided in the 1974 Macintosh report on Oxon Hill Manor).

In addition to the primary research, I also conducted a good deal of secondary research. In general, the purpose of my investigations was to obtain information with which to establish the historical context-particularly regarding land use and labor patterns-for the history of Oxon Hill Manor. My research findings, not yet complete, will be integrated into the discussions of both the general historical background and the site-specific history of Oxon Hill Manor. Some of the sources consulted were:

- Ranson, Roger L. and Richard Sutch. One Kind of Freedom: The Economic Consequences of Emancipation. 1977
- Mandle, Jay R. The Roots of Black Poverty: The Southern Plantation Economy after the Civil War. 1978.
- Brown, Letitia Woods. Free Negroes in the District of Columbia, 1790-1846. 1972
- Litwack, Leon F. Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery. 1979.
- Gleig, George Robert. Campaigns of the British Army at Washington and New Orleans in the Years 1814 and 1815. 1836.
- Blassingame, John. The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South. 1972.
- Middleton, Arthur P. Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era. 1953.
- Crowl, Philip A. Maryland During and After the Revolution: A Political and Economic Study. 1943
- Wyckoff, Vertrees J. Tobacco Regulation in Maryland. 1936.
- Ridgway, Whitman H. Community Leadership in Maryland, 1790-1840. 1979
- Barker, Charles A. The Background of the Revolution in Maryland. 1940
- Berlin, Ira. Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South. 1974
- Bridenbaugh, Carl. Myths and Realities: Societies of the Colonial South. 1952
- Craven, Avery O. Soil Exhaustion as a Factor in the Agricultural History of Virginia and Maryland, 1606-1860. 1926.
- Friis, Herman R. Geographical Reconnaissance of the Potomac River Tide-Water Fringe of Virginia from Arlington Memorial Bridge to Mount Vernon. 1968.
- Gray, Lewis Cecil. History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860. 2 vols. 1941.
- Gutheim, Frederick. The Potomac. 1949.
- Main, Gloria Lund. Tobacco Colony: Life in Early Maryland, 1650-1720. 1982.
- Manakee, Harold R. Maryland in the Civil War. 1961.
- Mangum, Charles S., Jr. The Legal Status of the Tenant Farmer in the Southeast. 1952.
- Newman, Harry Wright. Charles County Gentry. 1940
- Maryland and the Confederacy. 1976
- Smith, Daniel Blake. Inside the Great House: Planter Family Life in Eighteenth Century Chesapeake Society. 1980.

## 2. Format for Final Report

I propose to follow a format similar to that used in the 1985 report by Garrow and Associates entitled "Rural Settlement in the Charleston Bay Area: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Sites in the Mark Clark Expressway Corridor." Also, I propose not to explicitly address the hypotheses outlined in the September 4, 1984 "Technical Proposal for Archaeological Services." Given the results of my research, it seems more appropriate and feasible to directly address the themes outlined in the Mark Clark report-land and property ownership, land use, labor patterns, settlement patterns-and to indirectly discuss the topics mentioned in the 1984 technical proposal-world view and utilization of space, status advertisement versus economic efficiency, role and presence of various status groups, marketing patterns. To clarify: the report will be organized around the subjects of land and property ownership patterns, land use, labor systems, and settlement patterns but will discuss in the appropriate sections such questions as world view, social status, utilization of space, etc.

### Format Outline

#### I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

##### A. Methodology and Sources

###### 1. Themes

- a. land/property ownership
- b. land use
- c. labor patterns
- d. settlement patterns

-this section will include a general explanation of themes explored and why. Also orienting maps.

###### 2. Sources

Here, a much more extensive commentary than that utilized in the Mark Clark report will be employed. Specific comments on primary, secondary, and oral sources, including information on the most useful sources, gaps, etc. Discussion of map sources. Commentary on how documentation influenced nature of the report.

## B. Early History (Maryland; Virginia and South generally)

1. Settlement and Servants: The 17th Century
2. Tobacco and Slavery: The 18th Century
3. Decline and Adjustment: 1783-1860
4. The Civil War: 1860-1865

## C. Post Civil War

I have not yet determined a precise chronology or thematic categories. I will develop these once I have completed analysis of the 19th Century census material and a variety of secondary sources. This section will discuss the growth of diversified agriculture, the continued importance of tobacco, changing labor patterns (tenancy, etc.), land speculation, and the influence of nearby urban markets (Washington, Alexandria, Baltimore). It will also treat the 20th Century, focusing on the same topics (generally) and on the presence of Sumner Welles (generally).

## II. SITE DESCRIPTION

### A. Introduction

1. Presentation of maps of the site and of the region as appropriate.

### B. Historical Overview

1. The Addison Years, 1670 (or 1711)-1810
2. The Berry Years, 1810-1888
3. Land Speculation and Sumner Welles, 1888-?

### Comments:

The Addison Years will deal with the growth of the estate as a tobacco plantation from its origin through the death of Thomas Addison in 1774, then with its decline under the management of Rebecca Addison Hanson and Thomas Hanson and especially under the control of Walter Dulany Addison. The year 1810 is an obvious dividing point because of the sale of the mansion and 1328 acres around it, even though Walter Dulany Addison sold the entire estate in pieces between 1793 and 1820. I will include a map of the original 3,663-acre estate which shows the gradual dismantling of the property (fairly complete and precise, but not perfect).

The Berry Years section will cover the period from the purchase of the 1328 acres and the mansion house by Zachariah Berry in 1818 until the sale of what remained of the estate in 1888. It will treat occupancy, land use patterns, labor, etc. Land speculation in the area appears to have begun prior to 1888, but the dominant pattern at Oxon Hill was the break-up of the estate into smaller parcels very probably for use as individually-owned small truck farms. I have yet to determine precisely the pattern of agricultural change in the site area, since Oxon Hill Manor appears to have been influenced by both this parcelization process and land speculation (frequent turning over of the site-area land after 1888). Deeds from the 1880s and 1890s reveal some of the details on the parcelization of Oxon Hill Manor land.

### III. CHAIN OF TITLE

#### Final Note:

I plan to travel to Maryland to continue some research at the Maryland Historical Society, the University of Maryland, and the Hall of Records. I need to examine some additional tax assessment data, some genealogical material, and a variety of secondary sources (dissertations, books) not available at the UNC library. I expect to take two more trips, one in July and one in August.

I recently contacted Rev. Allan Freed of New York City regarding his knowledge of Oxon Hill Manor. Mr. Freed is a former president of the John Hanson Society. From our conversation it was clear that Mr. Freed did not possess either documentation or knowledge of use to the history of Oxon Hill Manor at this point in my research; that is, his information does not add to my research. He indicated that the issue of the burial place of John Hanson has not been resolved. He also reported that a Greek-style mausoleum was located on the hillside in front of the mansion house, overlooking the Potomac, but it is not known whether John Hanson or anyone else was buried at this location. Individuals whose names he does not recall have told him that a Dulany was buried at the spot and that a Berry was buried there. A Hanson descendent named Laura Carpenter Blynn told Mr. Freed before her death around 1970 that John Hanson died from eating cherries (Hanson died in November) and was buried in a grave on the front lawn overlooking his "beloved" Potomac River.

Mr. Freed also informed me that Robert Zehner, current president of the John Hanson Society does have the photograph of the Oxon Hill mansion house mentioned to me by Quinta Castle. Zehner apparently has a negative and some kind of blown up prints. The photo, Mr. Freed told me, shows the wings added to the house and several individuals standing in front of the house. I have not yet been able to contact Mr. Zehner, but Mr. Freed expects that he will be very cooperative about providing a copy of the photo. Mr. Zehner lives in Baltimore. I will send copies to Atlanta and Columbia as soon as I obtain the photo.